

effort to bring a hyper-partisan, job-destroying transportation bill to the floor. The Republican transportation bill, H.R. 7, would cut funding for 45 states, including over \$313 million in cuts to Minnesota, and eliminate over 500,000 jobs nationwide. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, a former Republican Congressman from Illinois, told Politico that H.R. 7 "is the most partisan transportation bill that I have ever seen." He added, "It's the worst transportation bill I've ever seen during 35 years of public service."

I agree with Secretary LaHood. Minnesota's economy and workers would be significantly harmed by H.R. 7. The construction industry in my state suffered the most significant job losses of any sector during the recent recession. Construction jobs are again being added in Minnesota but, as of March, only one quarter of the 46,000 construction jobs lost in the recession have been recovered. This Republican transportation bill would reverse the positive momentum for Minnesota's economy and throw thousands of workers back on the bench.

These devastating economic consequences are unacceptable and completely avoidable. I urge my colleagues to reject H.R. 7 and this short-term extension so the House can instead vote on the bipartisan Senate reauthorization to put Americans to work rebuilding our nation's infrastructure.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H. Con. Res. 112) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2013 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2014 through 2022:

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to the Republican Budget proposal.

More tax breaks for the wealthy and ending the Medicare guarantee for our nation's seniors are the wrong policies for America, particularly as millions are still suffering the effects of our worst financial crisis since the Great Depression and as we are struggling to restore economic growth.

As Ranking Member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I also want to highlight the effect this budget would have on our Federal workers—the backbone of our government.

They support our troops in the battlefield and provide care to our veterans. They protect our borders, safeguard our food supply, and ensure that our seniors get their Social Security checks.

In return, the majority has rewarded these middle-class Americans with an unprecedented assault on their compensation and benefits, including proposals to extend their current two-year pay freeze, to arbitrarily eliminate positions, and to slash their retirement benefits.

Federal workers have already done more than their share to help address our nation's fiscal woes.

They have contributed \$60 billion to deficit reduction as a result of the existing two-year pay freeze, and they are contributing an additional \$15 billion in higher pension contributions to help fund the unemployment insurance extension.

But House Republicans aren't finished.

The Republican budget directs the Oversight Committee to take an additional \$80 billion out of the pockets of these middle-class workers in the form of additional cuts to their pay and pensions.

That would more than double what they have already given to date.

These continued efforts to end Medicare, to cut our social safety net, and to slash the pay and benefits of middle-class federal workers are simply shameful, especially when this budget would use these savings to give unprecedented tax breaks to the millionaires and billionaires.

I oppose the Ryan budget and will oppose all bills that would take money out of the pockets of middle-class Americans before asking the wealthiest among us to contribute their fair share.

TRANSPORTATION ORIENTED JOBS INITIATIVE

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, today, along with Representative LIPINSKI, I am introducing legislation to stimulate the financing of passenger rail development from revenues generated from transportation oriented development.

The National High Performance Passenger Rail Transportation Oriented Development Act aims to capture some of the increasing value of commercial development around station areas, which in turn would help finance rail corridor infrastructure and operational expenses. Besides providing a funding stream for intercity and passenger operations, the initiative places emphasis on intermodal connectors to create vibrant communities along the corridor. The legislation aims to begin a major public private partnership initiative that will revitalize America's rail infrastructure to create a true third passenger transportation option to highways and aviation while at the same time creating intermodal access communities.

Under the proposal, the U.S. Department of Transportation will retain a Planning Developer who will establish guidelines for transportation oriented development programs, including special assessment districts or similar mechanisms to capture revenues from increasing commercial value. Rail corridor development funds will be established at the regional level to capture increasing real estate values. A stream of those revenues will be directed to support rail passenger operations.

The proposal permits qualified projects to apply for federal incentives to finance construction and produce jobs. These incentives will include direct access to existing Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration programs, including a high priority for federal transportation grant applications. The initiative will be staffed by existing employees and remain revenue neutral in that all program activities, including the work of the

Planning Developer, will be repaid once the high performance rail service and commercial development is implemented and generating revenues.

I hope that this bill will open a discussion on the possibilities and potential promise of passenger rail development in the U.S.

MR. ROBERT DILLMAN, PRESIDENT EAST STROUDSBURG UNIVERSITY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Robert Dillman, who will be retiring as President of East Stroudsburg University on June 30, 2012, after sixteen years of serving the university and our region. East Stroudsburg University is one of the fourteen state universities that compose the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. It offers 7,387 students a world class education. President Dillman came to East Stroudsburg University after several years of experience in higher education and undoubtedly left his mark. President Dillman, a native of Brooklyn, NY, demonstrated extraordinary leadership at East Stroudsburg University. By recognizing the importance of science and technology, he positioned the university as a key economic development force in Northeastern Pennsylvania. During his tenure, East Stroudsburg University became the first university in the United States to offer an undergraduate degree in computer security. The university also established its award-winning Business Accelerator Program, which joined the Ben Franklin Business Incubator Network and the University City Science Center's Port of Technology. In addition, President Dillman led the expansion of the Division of Research and Economic Development, which serves as a vital educational resource for technology-based entrepreneurs. Furthermore, he spearheaded the establishment of the university's world-class Science and Technology Center, which houses the departments of computer security and biotechnology, accommodates other sciences with classrooms, equipment, and labs, and is home to a state-of-the-art planetarium and a soon-to-come natural sciences museum.

President Dillman made substantive changes to the campus environment at East Stroudsburg by giving numerous faculty, staff, students, and community members the opportunity to take the world-renowned professional development workshop titled Seven Habits for Highly Effective People, which he brought to the university. As a result, university administrators are better equipped to effectively reach out to students, while the students themselves are more prepared to enter the professional world upon graduation.

Mr. Speaker, today, President Robert Dillman stands as important bearer of change to Northeastern Pennsylvania and the nation. I commend him for his years of committed service to East Stroudsburg University, his state, and country.

ASSESSING THE ROLE AND
IMPACT OF CHINA IN AFRICA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I chaired a hearing of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights focused on U.S. policy regarding China's evolving role in Africa. China has become America's premier economic competitor in Africa, providing loans and making investments far beyond what the United States is currently prepared to provide.

China has been engaged with African governments since the 1950s and has always portrayed itself as a fellow developing nation that was interested in solidarity with its prospective development partners. In reality, the Chinese government always had plans to gain the support they hoped to create among the newly independent African governments. The stadiums, other buildings and roads constructed by the Chinese were intended to build support for China among the African bloc of developing nations in its competition with the then-Soviet Union. Later, the goal was building support for the People's Republic of China replacing Taiwan as the sole China in the United Nations.

Now they no longer have to compete with the Soviet Union, and they have their seat on the UN Security Council, from where they protect dictators such as Omar al-Bashir and Robert Mugabe. So what is their aim in their Africa policy?

Is China a development partner for Africa? In 2005, the China Development Bank created a \$1 billion Africa Trade and Investment Fund, but the trade and investment initiatives funded cannot take place without the significant involvement of Chinese suppliers. It is difficult to quantify Chinese development aid to Africa because they refuse to disclose how much aid and investment goes to specific countries, although we do know that Chinese investment in Africa is estimated to exceed \$10 billion. Because the loan details are not open to public scrutiny, it is feared that these loans may pose a danger to the debt sustainability of African governments.

Is China an economic competitor to African countries? Many believe that China is engaged in a short-term resource grab, which takes little account of local needs and concerns, whether developmental, environmental or with respect to issues like human rights. Coupled with Chinese manufacturing and trade efficiency, this approach suggests that African development gains are being challenged, if not undermined, by Chinese competitiveness.

China, which has increasingly attempted to lock up much of the supply of strategic minerals from African countries, is now the leading producer of what are known as rare earth elements or rare earth metals, which are used in various technological devices, such as superconductors, electronic polishers, refining catalysts and hybrid car components. As time goes on, these minerals will increase in importance in the 21st century economy. South Africa used to be the world's leading source for these minerals, but its production is dwarfed by what China produces, which now rep-

resents 95% of rare earth supplies. Chinese production often releases toxic wastes into the general water supply, and that would tend to discourage increased South African production absent what could be expensive environmental safeguards.

Is China the new colonizer of Africa? Some would say that label is an exaggeration. However, China exports small businesses and labor to Africa. There are an estimated 800 Chinese corporations doing business in Africa and 750,000 Chinese working or living for extended periods in African countries. When their original assignments are completed, these Chinese workers become entrepreneurs selling subsidized Chinese products to out-compete their African counterparts.

An increasing number of Africans are becoming skeptical of Chinese behavior in their countries. For example, the issue of Chinese business practices became an issue in the 2011 elections in Zambia. Some Zambians felt the Chinese were worse than the British colonialists in their behavior toward workers. Following the election there, incoming President Michael Sata said to Chinese investors: "We welcome your investment, but as we welcome your investment, your investment should benefit Zambians and not Chinese."

One of the most prevalent charges against China's involvement in Africa is that they don't support international conditionality on aid to African countries. Therefore, Chinese involvement is seen as undermining the concept of tied aid that is intended to promote good governance. Chinese officials counter that they prefer not to interfere in the internal affairs of African governments.

While much of the rest of the international community regarded Sudan as having committed genocide, or at least crimes against humanity in its Darfur region, China, a major economic partner with the government in Khartoum, refused at first to join in sanctions against Sudan. China abstained from the vote in September 2004 when the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 1564 condemning the mass killing of civilians in the Darfur region, even though the measure stopped short of imposing oil sanctions. China even threatened to veto any further move to impose sanctions. It took concerted international pressure prior to the 2008 Beijing Olympics to force China to move closer to the international position on pressing Sudan to end its human rights abuses.

In a 2006 background report entitled, "China's Influence in Africa: Implications for the United States," the Heritage Foundation stated that China has provided weapons that have prolonged African conflicts or entrenched dictatorships. In 2003, several Hong Kong firms were accused of smuggling illegal arms including Chinese-made AK-47s, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers into Liberia and neighboring Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire, where rebels and mercenaries were involved in civil wars.

In 2004, the report continued, China sold Zimbabwe fighter aircraft and military vehicles for \$200 million despite the U.S. and EU arms embargo against Zimbabwe. China also provided a military-strength radio-jamming device, which the Harare government used to block broadcasts of anti-government reports from independent media outlets during the 2005 parliamentary election campaign.

So what really are China's goals for its African engagement?

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON
THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR
2013

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H. Con. Res. 112) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2013 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2014 through 2022:

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chair, next week is Passover, when the youngest child at the Seder table asks four questions, the answers to which explain the meaning of the holiday.

In keeping with the tradition of asking questions to understand the importance of key events, I'd like to suggest four questions to ask Republicans so that they can explain the reasoning behind their budget resolution.

Why does your budget resolution protect and indeed increase the wealth of the already-wealthy at the expense of everyone else? The Bible says, "He who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth and he who gives gifts to the rich—both come to poverty." (Proverbs 22:16). Income disparity is at near-historic levels in our Nation. Why then, does the Republican budget provide an average additional tax break of \$150,000 for millionaires and refuse to eliminate subsidies to highly profitable Big Oil companies, while asking seniors, children, the poor and middle-class families to sacrifice more and more?

Why does your budget resolution take away the Medicare guarantee? The Bible tells us, "You shall give due honor and respect to the elderly." (Leviticus 19:32). The average senior lives on \$19,000, one in three retirees depends on Social Security for 90 percent or more of their income, and 1 in 3 seniors will need help paying for long-term care. Why, then, does the Republican budget double already high out-of-pocket spending for seniors, threaten Social Security, and cut Medicaid by \$810 billion over the next decade?

Why does your budget resolution increase defense spending while cutting investments in our children and families? The Bible tells us, "A just balance and scales are the Lord's." (Proverbs 16:11). The U.S. defense budget is higher than the next 17 nations in the world combined and has increased in real terms for each of the past 13 years. Why, then, does the Republican budget renege on a balanced approach to deficit reduction—increasing defense spending and asking education, job training and creation, medical research and other domestic programs to bear the entire burden?

Why does your budget resolution take away food from the poor? The Bible tells us, "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." (1 John 3:17–18). Nearly 50 million Americans lack adequate food and 22 percent of America's children live in poverty. Why, then, does the Republican budget cut and cap the food assistance needed so that children, families and seniors can't get enough to eat?